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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Reserve

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

Issue #103
April 1980

1980 HONOR AWARDS CEREMONY.....The 34th Annual Honor Awards Ceremony will be held at 10 a.m., May 22, in the Departmental Auditorium on Constitution Avenue. Secretary Bergland will present awards for Distinguished and Superior Service. The program will include music by the U.S. Naval Academy Band, presentation of the Colors by the joint Armed Forces Color Guard and an address by a distinguished guest speaker. (Contact: John Kizler, OP, ext. 76977)

FY 1981 USDA BUDGET REVISIONS.....The revised 1981 budget submitted to the Congress by President Carter includes reductions of over \$2.2 billion (4.6%) in overall USDA program levels and \$1.4 billion (7.1%) in budget outlays. The President's proposals for USDA may be summarized as follows:

	1981 (\$ Millions)		
	Budget Authority	Budget Outlays	Program Level
January Budget (includes			
P.L. 480 budget amendment .	\$24,722	\$20,184	\$48,526
Food Assistance Programs	-453	-445	-453
Credit Programs	-34	-142	-794
CCC Programs	--	-635	-635
All Other Programs	-357	-220	-357
Total Changes	<u>-844</u>	<u>-1,442</u>	<u>-2,239</u>
Revised Budget	<u>23,878</u>	<u>18,742</u>	<u>46,287</u>

Net savings of \$453 million (3%) will be proposed for the food assistance programs. This revised program level of \$14.393 billion will continue to represent about 30% of the USDA total. Credit programs will be reduced by \$794 million (3.2%) and the revised program level will be \$23.349 billion or 50% of the USDA total. CCC programs will be reduced by 8.2% and all other programs by 3.7%. (Contact: Bob Barham, OBPE, ext. 76176)

FOREIGN TRAVEL TO OVERBURDENED POSTS....The Department of State has identified 33 foreign service posts which receive visits from an extraordinarily large number of United States Government officials. Effective immediately, proposals for official travel to these posts by all employees of the Executive Branch should be submitted to the Department of State for coordination. State's objective is to ensure that such travel is necessary and planned and timed in the best interests of the USDA, of the post concerned, and of our overall foreign policy.

Secretary's Memorandum NO. 2011, dated March 13, 1980, provides further details. (Contact: FAS Agricultural Attaché Office, ext. 76138)

QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS FOR SES POSITIONS.....OP will shortly issue instructions entitled "Developing Qualifications Standards, Rating Schedules and Vacancy Announcements for the Senior Executive Service." These guidelines supplement OP instructions on the SES staffing process to insure compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing selections, particularly the Uniform Guidelines an Employee Selection Procedures. These guidelines provide principles for assuring that selection procedures are job-related and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or sex.

The new instructions require a job analysis as a preliminary step in the development of selection procedures; qualification requirements and selection procedures clearly related to ability to perform the duties of the job being filled with documentation of the basis for determination, and documentation of cutoff scores and how they are developed. (Contact: Earl Hadlock, OP, ext. 73641)

SESCDP.....The first USDA Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program was held on March 26-28. Sponsored by the Secretary's Executive Resources Board, the program is directed to managers in grade GS-15 or equivalent who have demonstrated promise for assuming executive responsibilities in the newly created Senior Executive Service which was established under the Civil Service Reform Act to improve management and productivity within the Federal service. Program speakers included Secretary Bergland, Deputy Secretary Williams, Assistant Secretary Wallace, Frank Mulhern, former APHIS Administrator, and Sy Pranger, Associate Director for Agency Relations, OPM.

The SECDP is an 18 month, part-time program that includes formal training and a series of developmental executive assignments. Candidates in the program will continue to perform their regularly assigned duties. (Contact: John Kizler, OP, ext. 76977)

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL/MERIT PAY.....During the past several weeks, the Performance Appraisal Systems Unit of OP's Civil Service Reform Act Implementation Group has participated both inside and outside the Department in introducing the Department's training package on performance appraisal. Consisting of a slide tape presentation as well as a core trainer's guide, this package was shown at the Annual Training Officers Conference held at Fort Leslie J. McNair on March 27, 1980. As a result of the showing, requests have been received from several government agencies to review the package.

Within the Department, the training package was unveiled at a Managers/Supervisors briefing held in the Jefferson Auditorium on March 28, 1980, at the direction of the servicing personnel officers for all Departmental staff offices.

Now that the Department's performance appraisal system has been approved, it is especially important for all agencies and staff offices in the Department to identify all merit pay employees by August 1, 1980. It is also imperative that all agencies schedule training for managers/supervisors and that they all have measurable performance standards in place by October 1, 1980. The Office of Personnel will be responsible for monitoring the training that has been scheduled and that which has been completed. (Contact: Bill Riley, OP, ext. 76905)

USDA FEDERAL WOMEN'S WEEK..... April 28-May 2 has been designated as Federal Women's Week in USDA. The keynote speaker at 9:30 AM on April 28 will be Barbara Schlei, Administrator of AMS. Workshops and films will be presented throughout the week. Of special interest will be a panel of male managers discussing their perceptions of women in the workforce. This is scheduled for April 30 at 11:30 AM. The closing speaker on May 2 at 10:30 AM will be Vivian Derryck, Director of the Secretariat for International Women's Decade. All presentations will be in the patio of the Administration Building. (Contact: Marjory Hart, OEO, ext. 72635)

MINORITY AND SPECIAL TARGET DIRECTORY..... Grass Roots Organizations, a 322 page directory for agency use in improving outreach to minority, women, aged, handicapped and other special target audiences is now available through agency civil rights offices. The directory prepared by OEO lists names, addresses and telephone numbers by State and City for organizations and media outlets that can be used to reach those "hard to reach" audiences. (Contact: Ron Hall, OEO, ext. 75454)

OUTREACH '80 SEMINAR..... In the continuing outreach effort, OEO conducted a seminar in Santa Fe with speeches by Assistant Secretaries Wallace and Mercure. For the first time in the Outreach series, there was a panel on employment opportunities in USDA. Comments by attendees indicated that the seminar was well structural and worthwhile. (Contact: James Frazier, OEO, ext. 74256)

OEO-OP EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE..... A joint OEO-OP conference to assist in the cultivation of a team approach in promoting affirmative action programs throughout the Department will be held from April 21-23. The first day will be for Assistant Secretaries, heads of agencies, personnel directors and EEO staff. The second and third day will be a workshop for EEO and personnel staff at the Ramada Inn, Bethesda. (Contact: Evangeline Elizondo, OEO, ext 72727)

COURSES OF INTEREST AT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, USDA..... Special Programs of the Graduate School will soon publish a catalog of programs, workshops and seminars related to the Civil Service Reform Act that are available now, or will be shortly, for supervisors, managers and executives. Programs for senior Federal executives and managers include Senior Executive Leadership; Organization Performance Measurement; Individual Performance Appraisal; the Change Process and Conflict Management; Executive Selection and Development; Bonus Systems, Merit Pay and the Incentive Process; and Counseling and Coaching Skills.

Also offered on a contract basis are the Assessment Centers for Executives (GS-14 and above); Middle Management (GS-12-13); and First Line Supervisors (GS-7-11). The Assessment Center is a systematic method for identifying and developing personnel talent. It helps organizations make internal and external selection decisions and provides indicators for an employee's future career development. This is particularly important in the selection of candidates for the Senior Executive Service. (Contact: Graduate School, ext. 73247)

FY 1980 SMALL AND MINORITY GOALS.....After a series of negotiations with the Small Business Administration, the Department has been assigned a goal that would give 68% of total prime contracts awards to small business. In addition, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy has provided the Department with minority business goals for the same period. Agency goals based on estimated procurement in excess of \$10,000 are shown on the chart below. An additional \$5 million goal for purchases of under \$10,000 has also been assigned but is not reflected on this chart.

1980 USDA Minority Business Goal

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Estimated Total Procurement</u>	<u>8 (a) Goals (\$000's)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Minority Goals (\$000's)</u>	<u>%</u>
AMS	8,000	160	2	240	3
ASCS	568,044	4,310	1	260	< 1
APHIS	17,500	1,745	10	613	4
ESCS	5,000	50	1	0	0
OEO	20	20	100	0	0
FmHA	10,000	500	5	100	1
FCIC	0	0	0	0	0
FNS	20,000	1,000	5	200	1
FSQS	471,800	8,095	2	2,090	< 1
FAS	100	0	0	12	12
FS	230,927	4,904	2	10,396	5
OIG	2,700	675	25	0	0
O&F	15,000	450	3	150	1
OP	385	36	9	0	0
REA	820	15	2	30	4
OSHM	50	25	50	0	0
SEA	39,500	3,950	10	1,975	5
SCS	135,116	2,521	2	3,479	3
OT	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,524,962	28,456	1.9	19,545	1.3

(Contact: Paul McCloskey, OSDBU, ext. 77921)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN CONFERENCE.....Four agencies of the Department (FS, SCS, FmHA, SEA), plus OSDBU in the coordinating role, recently participated in a meeting of the National Association of Women in Commerce-Regional Trade Mission for Women Entrepreneurs in San Francisco. The goal of this five day conference attended by 3,000 women and sponsored by the Department of Commerce was to provide a comprehensive view of business opportunities through procurement and contracting with the Government. USDA, in addition to providing exhibits, sponsored a three hour procurement workshop on "How to do Business with the Department of Agriculture." (Contact: Preston Davis, OSDBU, ext. 77117)

OSDBU TRAINING SEMINAR.....OSDBU will conduct a seminar early in June for all USDA personnel in the D.C. metropolitan area responsible for carrying out the small and disadvantaged business program. The objectives of the seminar will be to discuss problems encountered in the implementation of P.L. 95-507 and to solicit proposed solutions. Similar sessions will be conducted on a quarterly basis if this first one proves beneficial. Topics for discussion will be solicited from OSDBU coordinators. (Contact: Mel Moore, OSDBU, ext. 77117)

FEDERAL RIDERSHARING PROGRAM.....On February 1, the President signed Executive Order 12191 calling for the establishment of a Federal Ridersharing Program at all Federal facilities. To assist in implementing this program, O&F is developing a computerized system for carpool/vanpool matching in the Metropolitan D.C. area. This system is scheduled to be fully operational by June 1.

In the D.C. complex 725 carpools and 20 vanpools have assigned parking spaces and there is room for 180 more. Compared with single occupant commuter cars, this pooling effort saves approximately 1.4 million gallons of gasoline annually. These savings can be increased significantly by adding more carpools and vanpools.

Informational packets on forming and maintaining vanpools have been developed and are now available. Similar efforts will be undertaken at field locations. (Contact: Bill Roth, O&F, ext. 79215)

DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVES SYSTEM REVIEW.....O&F has awarded a contract to Advanced Technology Inc. to review all Departmental issuance systems and improve the directives and the way we manage them. The review, scheduled for completion in August, has four primary objectives: review current systems to measure their effectiveness and identify strengths and weaknesses of each issuance series; review current responsibilities and procedures of each issuing office and recommend modern techniques for managing each series; develop an improved classification and codification system for Departmental directives and recommend standards and formats for each series; and develop a Departmental directive system which will better serve agency needs.

The contractor will be visiting staff offices and agencies to identify user reactions and problems with the present system. (Contact: Roxanne Williams, O&F, ext. 72118)

OFFICE OF FEDERAL PROCUREMENT POLICY ITEMS.....

- OFPP is in the process of distributing for comment draft segments of the new Federal Acquisition Regulations. These will replace the Federal Procurement Regulations and apply to all acquisitions made from appropriated funds. Preliminary drafts should be completed this summer with the final draft issued for implementation by January 1981. (Contact: Doug Metzger, O&F, ext. 77527)
- OFPP is in the process of issuing a new circular setting policy and definitions for consultant services. This follows the recent GAO audit that found "serious and pervasive" problems in the way government agencies contract for consulting services. While the new circular will not change the definition of consulting services, it will create new responsibilities for contracting officers and require a higher level of agency approval for all consulting service arrangements. (Contact: Tony Cooch, O&F, ext. 77527)

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.....

- The study on "Managing Federal Assistance in the 1980's" mandated by the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-224) has been completed by OMB. The objective of the study was to determine the feasibility of developing a comprehensive system of guidance for the use of grant, cooperative agreements, and other forms of Federal assistance. OMB has concluded that a system of guidance should concentrate on improving the management of assistance, not a specific legal code, single statute or set of regulations.

The new system would include a process allowing States, larger local governments, and universities to be certified as meeting general assistance requirements. This certification would then be accepted for all awards made by Federal agencies.

The study recommends that an Interagency Assistance Policy Advisory Group be created to advise OMB informally on the effects of assistance policies and to suggest areas for improvement. This group would be composed of senior agency officials. In addition, an Assistance Policy Unit will be designated by OMB to review all decisions affecting grants from all other branches within OMB. (Contact: Lyn Zimmerman, O&F, 472-9660)

- The Federal Assistance Reform Act of 1980 (S.878) gives support to the recommendations resulting from the P.L. 95-224 study by encouraging the consolidation of grant programs when justified, the simplification and standardization of Federal assistance national policy requirements, and the full dissemination of information regarding Federal assistance programs.

The proposed bill will also impact on other Federal assistance issues and addresses the idea of a single financial and compliance audit system. It establishes that GAO, in cooperation with Treasury and OMB, will develop a standardized system for auditing all Federal assistance programs.

Additionally, the bill revises and continues the efforts contained in the Joint Funding Simplification Act of 1974 by allowing recipients to account for funds as though they were received from one source. The Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs has completed all hearings on the proposed legislation. Mark-ups are scheduled this week. The House has not yet taken action. (Contact: Millie Ramming, O&F, 472-9660)

MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE..... The next deadline for submission of Management Council Newsletter articles is May 14. Please submit articles of interest to management officials of the Department to Neil I. Van Vliet, Management Staff, room 115-A. All items submitted must be approved at the appropriate agency or staff office level prior to submission.

FREEZE ON FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS.....Deputy Secretary Williams has ordered a total freeze on the purchase of office and household furniture and furnishings. This freeze is the direct result of intensive investigations by Senator Chiles and the Office of the Inspector General. These investigations revealed that Federal departments have been ordering new furniture and furnishings when similar items were already in storage and that the new and used furniture in storage substantially exceeded requirements.

Exceptions from this freeze will be granted only when an emergency exists and requirements cannot be filled from stored or excess stocks or the items cannot be rehabilitated or repaired. All exceptions must be approved by the Assistant Secretary for Administration and GSA. An emergency is defined as a natural disaster such as fire a flood, a set of circumstances that endanger the safety or health of an employee, or the lack of the required items will seriously impact that Department's mission.

Valid requests for furniture or furnishings should be directed through agency property officers who will attempt to meet requirements from excess or rehabilitated furniture. It may be necessary for some employees to do with less than the desired furniture and furnishings and, in some cases, to do without if the requirement does not constitute an emergency. (Contact: Harold Franklin, O&F, ext. 73141)

1980 SAVINGS BOND CAMPAIGN.....A kick-off rally for this year's savings bond campaign will be held in Jefferson Auditorium at 1:00 PM on April 28. Featured speakers will include Secretary Bergland and Assistant Secretary Foreman, the USDA Vice Chairperson for the campaign. The purpose of the rally is to encourage USDA employees to "take stock in America" and in their own futures by buying the new EE series Energy Savings Bonds. The unique tax advantages of these bonds will be highlighted in the presentation.

Jerry Miles, Deputy Chief for Administration, FS, is the Department Co-ordinator for the campaign. The Department's goal is to reach 75% participation with a 25% increase allotment for those already buying bonds. (Contact: Janine Benyus, FS, ext. 76957)

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